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In The Claims:

Please cancel claims 27, 28 and 30-33 without prejudice to applicant's right to pursue the claimed subject matter in a future application.

Please amend claims 1, 6, 11, 12, 15 and 24 as follows:

C1
1. (Twice Amended) A chimeric protein for inhibiting the expression of a gene which comprises (1) a DNA methyltransferase whose DNA-binding activity is attenuated relative to that of naturally occurring DNA methyltransferase, and (2) a DNA binding protein linked thereto that binds sufficiently close to the gene's promoter sequence to permit methylation of a methylation site within the promoter, thus inhibiting expression of the gene.

C2
6. (Twice Amended) The chimeric protein of claim 1, wherein the DNA methyltransferase is a *M.SssI* DNA methyltransferase whose DNA-binding activity is attenuated relative to that of naturally occurring *M.SssI* DNA methyltransferase, or a mutated mammalian DNA methyltransferase whose DNA binding activity is attenuated relative to that of naturally occurring mammalian DNA methyltransferase.

C3
11. (Amended) A method for inhibiting expression of a gene which comprises contacting a promoter of the gene with the chimeric protein of claim 1 so as to methylate the promoter, thus inhibiting expression of the gene.

HMP3
12. (Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the target gene is an endogenous gene.